

US steel industry officials ask Congress for help on China

STEEL BUSINESS BRIEFING

June 17, 2009

American steel industry officials implored the US Congressional Steel Caucus yesterday to step up efforts to prevent what they contend has been the continued dumping of subsidized Chinese steel.

During a caucus hearing attended by Steel Business Briefing, a 16-member coalition representing labor, steelmakers, raw materials suppliers, trade organizations and manufacturing interests called on Congress to better enforce existing trade laws and enact new ones aimed at stemming the tide of goods from the Asian nation.

Roger Lindgren, president of US tubemaker V&M Star, asked for legislation to bring US laws up to WTO codes by adding duty-as-cost provisions, clarify injury standards and apply anti-subsidy laws to imports from non-market economies such as China for the same 15-year period as market economies, among other measures.

"We need to enforce our trade laws and not allow the rest of the world, especially China, to use the United States as the 'consumer of last resort' who will prop up their industries at the expense of ours," added Jim Robinson, a United Steelworkers union official.

Their pleas were not unwelcome. Pennsylvania Congressman Tim Murphy challenged those who would trust China on issues like a global emissions regime. "This is the same country that sends us fungus in their diapers, leaded toys, toxic baby bottles, poison dog food, harmful building materials," he said. "They dump steel on our shores, hack into our computers, and spy on us. Hardly a country I would trust."